Creating Inclusive Environments in a Politically Charged Climate

Melissa A. Reeves, Ph.D., NCSP, LPC
Winthrop University
National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) – Immediate Past President
mereev@aol.com or reevesm@winthrop.edu

VA - Department of Juvenile Justice
September 20, 2017

*with contributions from Dr. Christina Conolly

Workshop Outline

- Concepts, definitions, statistics, characteristics
- Understanding race, privilege, bias
- Social identity - impact on physical and psychological safety
- Culturally competent and responsive climate

Difficult Times & Current Stressors

- Community violence
- Targeted violence
- Political unrest
- Terrorist attacks
- Discrimination- racial and religious
- Hate attacks
- Modeling of negative behaviors and rhetoric
- Recent immigration, acculturation, refugee status
- Anti-immigrant rhetoric

- Poverty
- Day-to-day stressors
- Acute and chronic trauma exposure
- Bullying
- Intolerance
- Academic challenges
- Financial challenges
- Others….

Ten Days After Election: Harassment & Intimidation

HATE INCIDENT MOTIVATION

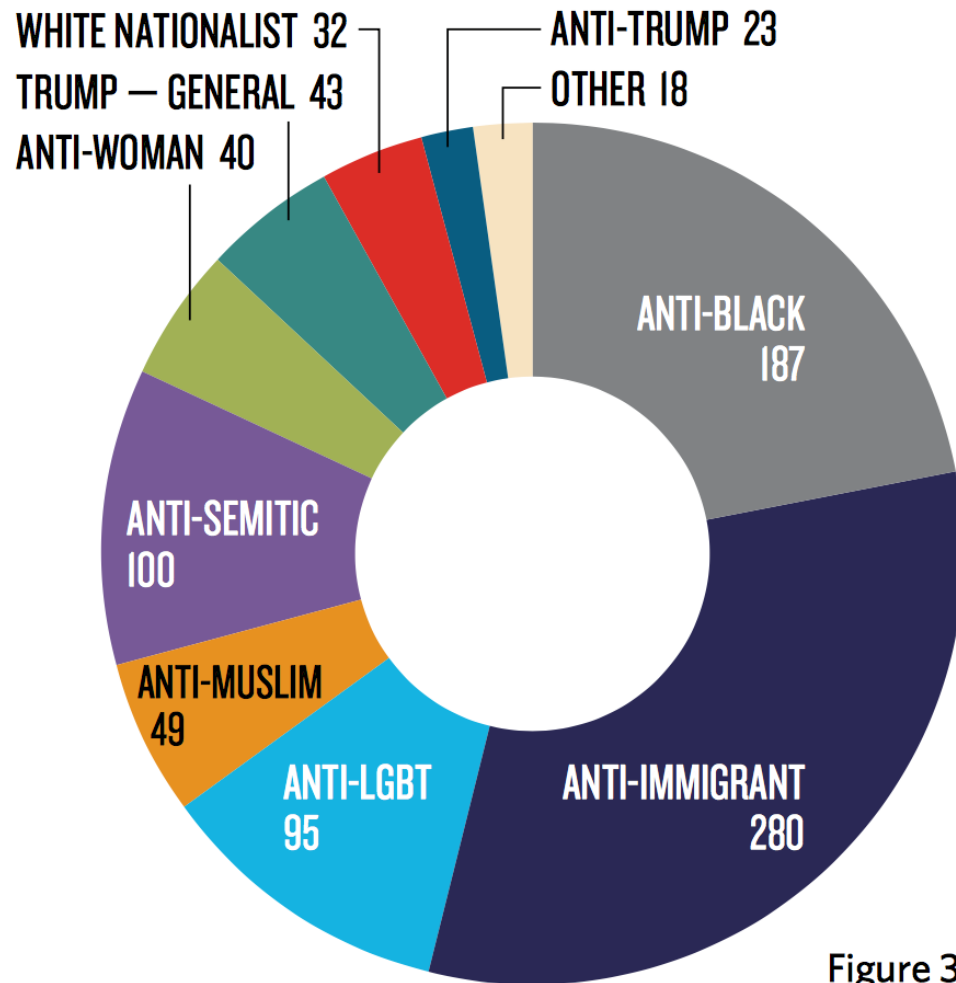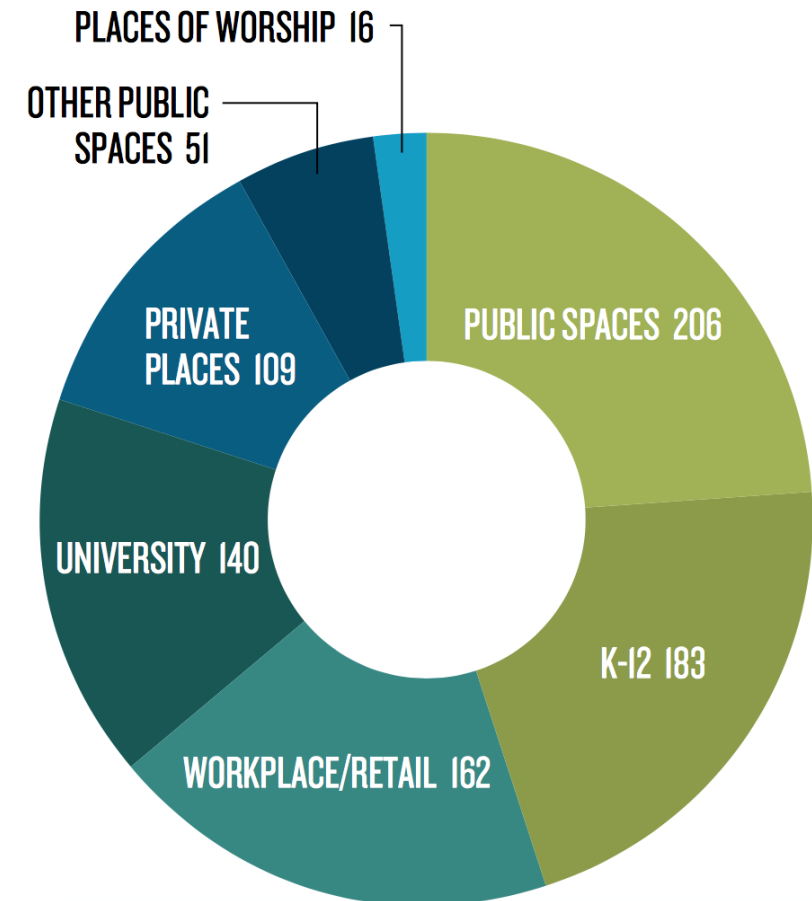WHITE NATIONALIST 32
TRUMP — GENERAL 43
ANTI-WOMAN 40
ANTI-TRUMP 23
OTHER 18

ANTI-BLACK 187
ANTI-SEMITIC 100
ANTI-MUSLIM 49
ANTI-LGBT 95
ANTI-IMMIGRANT 280

Figure 3

HATE INCIDENT LOCATIONS
Figure 2

PLACES OF WORSHIP 16
OTHER PUBLIC SPACES 51
PRIVATE PLACES 109
UNIVERSITY 140
PUBLIC SPACES 206
K-12 183
WORKPLACE/RETAIL 162

4

Examples

Clarksburg, WV

Durham, North Carolina

Columbus, OH

The Context for Immigrants

- One of marginalization, racialization, and pressures toward conformity
  - requires immigrant students to give up their home language and cultural identity.
- Nation has turned toward exclusion
- Dismantling of bilingual education
- Discussion of cultural diversity or curriculum diversity are disconnected from discussions of equity.

Trauma Exposure- ACE's

- 2013 US study of youth residing in juvenile detention facilities:
  - 93% of youth report at least one traumatic exposure
  - 84% reported ≥ 2
  - 57% reported ≥ 6
- 66-75% physically abused, 11-40% sexually abused
- >50% of sample had witnessed life threatening violence or death

- Low socioeconomic status
- 2 in 3 have had child welfare involvement
- 90% of repeat offenders

Complex trauma rates 300% higher than community samples 8

Cox, et al (2017)

Complex Trauma – Long-term Impact

❑ Repeated exposure to interpersonal violence & failures of protection

❑ Affects multiple domains

- emotional reactivity & regulation
- behavior
- attention & cognition
- self-concept & future orientation
- attachment & relationships

Disrupts development, including formation of a self and ability to form a secure attachment bond.

Cox, et al (2017)

Survival Coping

- Coping strategies used to relieve the anxiety brought on by feeling "victimized" while attempting to protect oneself
- Rapid, automatic adjustments to avoid harm and mobilize or diminish arousal
  - Body goes into "alarm" mode
- Affects three key self-regulation systems in the brain:
  - Reward/Motivation Systems
  - Distress Tolerance Systems
  - Executive Systems for Emotion and Information Processing

We call them survival coping, but to our youth, it's usually just "living"...

Cox, et al (2017)

Involvement with Justice System – Long-Term Impact

- Low educational attainment
  - undiagnosed or underserved learning disabilities
  - >2/3 discontinue school following release from long-term detention
- Disqualification from subsidized housing & benefits, student loan eligibility
- Detrimental impact on employment
- Reliance on criminal activity for income
- Higher likelihood of association with violent peers & being a victim of violence
- 4-5x more likely to die before age 25 than peers in the general population

The direct costs of locking up youth are just the tip of the iceberg.

When you consider the rest of the estimated $8-21 billion we pay each year to confine young people, it's clear **we all lose.**

Direct costs of locking up youth

Fewer High School Graduates

Pay Less $ in Taxes

More Likely to Commit Future Crimes

Earn Less $

More Reliance on Public Assistance

More Costs to Future Crime Victims

JUSTICE POLICY INSTITUTE

Read the report at: JusticePolicy.org/StickerShock

Cox, et al (2017)

Difficulties with Attachment

- Attachment forms the basis for emotion regulation
- Insecure attachment styles are linked to greater likelihood of MH disorders, including CD
- Youth with complex trauma are more likely to develop insecure attachment styles
- What does this mean?
    - We can use attachment theory to help us understand how to better work with our clients

It's less about what you say, and more about how you are.

Cox, et al (2017)

Workshop Outline

- Concepts, definitions, statistics, characteristics
- Understanding race, privilege, bias
- Social identity - impact on physical and psychological safety
- Culturally competent and responsive climate

Begins with Understanding Race & Privilege

❑ Acknowledge and understand how our own experiences and upbringing influence how we view world

❑ Differences in identity and struggles related to place and power are woven throughout social and political history and culture

❑ Diversity has been country's strength but path to equality and mutual respect has been rocky

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Role of Privilege

- Many have never been asked or required to reflect on own privileged status
- Uncomfortable, discordant with common narrative
- Have seen it as suppressing but not always acknowledging the benefits
- Comes in many forms and also assigned within groups
- Problematic when:
  - it skews our personal interactions and judgments
  - contributes to or blinds us to systematic barriers for those who do not possess a certain privilege…thus perpetuating inequity
- Concept of "unearned advantages"

"Privilege is not visible to its holder; it is merely there, a part of the world, a way of life, simply the way thing are." (Wideman & Davis, 1995)

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Bias

- ❑ Overt Bias
- ❑ Explicit Bias
  - ❑ Conscious
  - ❑ Deliberative
  - ❑ Social and personal values
  - ❑ Self-Report
- ❑ Implicit Bias
  - ❑ Unconscious
  - ❑ Spontaneous/automatic
  - ❑ Habit from direct & vicarious experience

Disproportionality

"[o]ne should not infer that racial bias exists in the juvenile justice system simply on the basis that minorities are overrepresented at most stages of juvenile case processing.

Rather, one should examine how race is related to a variety of contextual factors that may place minorities at greater risk for involvement in delinquent behavior and the juvenile justice system"

(Hill 2004, p. 26).

Defining Equity

❑ *Equity* is the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically. (WHO)

❑ Equality is achieved when individuals are all treated the same and have access to similar resources.

❑ Equity is achieved when all individuals receive the resources they need so they are prepared for success

EQUALITY

EQUITY

THE DIFFERENCE MATTERS.

19

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

Self-Reflection Questions

1. When was the last time you had to think about your ethnicity, race, gender identity, ability level, religion, and/or sexual orientation? What provoked you to think about it or acknowledge it?

2. When using social media, how diverse if your feed? How diverse are friends and followers?

3. How do you respond when others make negative statements towards individuals of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Self-Reflection Questions

4. How often do you go into social settings where the majority of individuals are of a different ethnicity, race, gender, ability level, religion, sexual orientation and/or gender identity than yourself?

5. If you recognized your privilege, what did you do with this realization?

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Rather than trying to "de-bias" through convincing, it is more effective to engage in….

"exercising good relationships-building skills, as in establishing rapport and trust among vulnerable youth"
(Graham and Lowery 2004, p. 501).

Workshop Outline

- Concepts, definitions, statistics, characteristics
- Understanding race, privilege, bias
- Social identity - impact on physical and psychological safety
- Culturally competent and responsive climate

Social Identity

- How individuals define themselves in their social world
- Social groups in which they place themselves or are placed
- Complex - shaped by social and cultural factors; assimilation or rejection of these factors.
- Social context shapes social identity, and
- One's social identity simultaneously offers a framework for negotiating and giving meaning to a social environment.
- Underlying assumption about ethnicity and race impacts how different individuals of color are viewed in social contexts, making distinctions between "good" or "bad" diversity (Randolph, 2013).

Addressing these issues requires political will and teachers and administrators willing to take risks (Weisman and Hansen, 2008).

Why Cultural Humility?

Being aware of our biases and being open to the meaning that is created through authentic interactions with diverse cultures is fundamental.

Without this, stereotypes and biases inherent in institutions or organizations can become agents of historic patterns of marginalization.

- Challenges individual and institutions to address inequalities.

- Instead of focusing on mastery in understanding others, this model requires personal accountability in challenging institutional barriers.

Workshop Outline

- Concepts, definitions, statistics, characteristics
- Understanding race, privilege, bias
- Social identity - impact on physical and psychological safety
- Culturally competent and responsive climate

Individual Level: **Self-Reflection**

- What are my cultural identities?
- How do my cultural identities shape my worldview?
- How does my own background help or hinder my connection to students/communities?
- What are my initial reactions to students who are culturally different than me?
- How much do I value input from my service users?
- How do I make space for my clients to name their own identities?
- What do I learn about myself when I listen to others who are different than me?

Individual Level: **Power Imbalances**

- What social and economic barriers that my clients?

- What specific experiences are my clients having that are related to oppression or systemic issues?

- How does my practice actively counter and challenge power imbalances?

- How do I extend my responsibility beyond the individual client and advocate for change at a larger level? (Institutional, local, state, national?)

Culturally Competent Leaders/Mentors

- ❏ *Use authority to lead and guide, not control*
- ❏ Assess one's own culture
- ❏ Value diversity
- ❏ Manage dynamics of difference
- ❏ Adapt to diversity
- ❏ Institutionalize cultural knowledge
- ❏ Value professional development - expand multicultural understanding, knowledge of nondiscriminatory practice

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Institutional Level: **Self-Reflection**

- How do we organizationally define culture and diversity?

- Does our organizational culture encourage respectful, substantive discussions about difference, oppression, and inclusion - a culture of collaboration?

- How does our hiring process reflect a commitment to diverse staff and leadership?

- Do we monitor hiring practices to ensure active recruitment, hiring, and retention of diverse staff?

- Does our staff reflect the communities we serve?

- Is our leadership reflective of the populations/communities we serve?

Safe, Supportive, Positive Climates

❑ *Must focus on building relationships!!!!*
❑ Empower
❑ Reinforce a positive climate
❑ Model and teach desired behaviors
❑ Reassure will do all you can to protect
❑ Give them hope
❑ Help manage strong emotions
❑ Reinforce acceptance and appreciation for diversity as critical values
❑ Help them navigate difficult systems/environments

NASP (2016) – Guidance for Reinforcing Safe, Supportive, and Positive School Environments

Institutional Level: **Power Imbalances**

- How do we actively address inequalities internally (policies and procedures) and externally (legislative advocacy)?
- How do we define and live out the value of social justice?
- What are the organizational structures we have that encourage action to address inequalities?
- What training and professional development opportunities do we offer that address inequalities and encourage active self-reflection, and address power and privilege?
- How do we engage with the larger community to ensure their voices are heard in our work?

Talking to Others About Privilege

1. Start by discussing how privilege looks in our society and which groups have privilege and which do not.
2. Stress that privilege is relative to each individual's lived experience.
3. Recognize that having privilege does not require feeling guilty for your privilege.
4. Determine and offer ways to challenge systems of privilege and oppression in your own life.

Lesson Plan for MS and HS: http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

NASP (2016) – Understanding Race and Privilege

Best Practices

Culture of Dialogue:
- ☐ Opportunities for open and honest discussion regarding:
  - ▪ Race
  - ▪ Equity
  - ▪ Sexual Orientation and Gender
- ☐ Needs of the community/agency/individuals
- ☐ In a multilingual environment

Culture of Collaboration:
- ☐ Equity is important to all of us:
  - ▪ Parents – Family liaisons
  - ▪ Teachers
  - ▪ Counselors
  - ▪ Officers
  - ▪ Staff
  - ▪ Administration
- ☐ Community

Culture of Change:
- ☐ Providing the resources to change culture
- ☐ Professional development
- ☐ Creating positions that address needs (job skills, mental heath, mentoring…)
- ☐ Empowerment of students
- ☐ Diverse curriculum development

Culture of Equity:
- ☐ Success for all:
  - ▪ Celebrations of diverse cultures
  - ▪ Access to quality academic and skills training
  - ▪ Academic achievement
  - ▪ Culturally diverse staff

Small Steps Change Lives

- Little things, daily, can add up to big changes over time
- What you do on a day-to-day basis helps clients to make growth over time
- Don't get overwhelmed by the big issues and barriers; start small and build towards larger goals
- Find others willing to support change and together you can accomplish great things
- Ignore the negative and focus on the positive…everyone has strengths
- We may not always see the outcomes of our work but you are making a difference!
- REMEMBER…you as an individual can do great things!

Resources

The International Rescue Committee

- http://www.rescue.org/where/united_states

The State Refugee Coordinators

- http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/orr/resource/orrfunded-programs-key-contacts

Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services (BYRCS)

- http://www.byrcs.org

Congreso de Latinos Unidos, Inc.

- http://www.congreso.net/about/agency-profile/

PFLAG

- https://www.pflag.org

Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

- http://www.glsen.org

Resources

- National Association of School Psychologists. (2016). *Talking About Race and Privilege: Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students* [handout]. Bethesda, MD: Author.
  - http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice

- Achieving Racial Equity: Calling the Social Profession to Action:
  - http://www.antiracistalliance.com/SWPIRacialEquityReport.pdf

  - http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/1431_198/RacialEquityResources.htm

  - http://www.indiana.edu/~equity/resources.php

  - Coming Together In Skokie & Niles Township

References

☐ Ahram, R Fergus, E. Noguera, P. (2011) Addressing racial/ethnic disproportionality in special education: Case studies of suburban school districts, *Teachers College Record 113*(10): 2233–226.

☐ Ayón, Cecilia (2016) Talking to Latino Children About Race, Inequality, and Discrimination: Raising Families in an Anti-Immigrant Political Environment. *State University Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 7(3).

☐ Bates, L.A., & Glick, J.E. (2013). Does it matter if teachers and schools match the student? Racial and ethnic disparities in problem behaviors. *Social Science Research, 42*, 1180-1190.

☐ Bell, Z. & Rasquiza, A (2014). *Implict bias & juvenile justice: A review of the literature*. National Center for Youth Law. http://youthlaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Implicit-Bias-Juvenile-Justice-Lit-Review-for-ncyl-web3.pdf

☐ Burris C.C., Wiley, E., Welner, K., Murphy, J., (2008) Accountability, rigor, and detracking: Achievement effects of embracing a challenging curriculum as a universal good for all students. *Teachers College Record, 110*(3), 571-607.

☐ Cikara, M., Bruneau, E.G., & Saxe, R.R. (2011). Us and them: Intergroup failures of empathy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 20*, 149-153. doi: 10.1177/0963721411408713

☐ Cox, L. J., Marsh, A., & Linick, J, Cabrera, J (2017, August 4). *Re-examining conduct disorder through the lens of complex trauma.* APA Annual Convention, Washington DC.

☐ Eberhardt, J.L., Goff, P.A., Purdie, V.J., & Davies, P.G. (2004). Seeing black: Race, crime, and visual processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*, 876–893.

References

- Garcia, M. E., Frunzi, K., Dean, C. B., Flores, N., & Miller, K. B. (2016). *Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education: Parts 1-4* (REL 2016 – 184, 151, 152, 153). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs.

- Gilliam, W.S., Maupin, A.N., Reyes, C.R., Accavitti, M., Shic, F. (2016). *A research study brief: Do Early Educators' Implicit Biases Regarding Sex and Race Relate to Behavior Expectations and Recommendations of Preschool Expulsions and Suspensions?* Yale University Child Center.

- Graham, S., & Lowery, B. S. (2004). Priming unconscious racial stereotypes about adolescent offenders. *Law and Human Behavior, 28*(5), 483-504.

- Gregory, A., Skiba, R.J., & Noguera, P.A. (2010). The achievement gap and the discipline gap: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational Researcher, 39*(1), 59–68.

- Jimenez-Castellanos, O. (2010). Relationship between educational resources and school achievement: a mixed method intra-district analysis. *Urban Review, 42*(4), 351-371.

References

- Lowenhaupt, Rebecca (2016) Immigrant Acculturation in Suburban Schools Serving the New Latino Diaspora, *Peabody Journal of Education, 91*:3, 348-365.

- Martinez, P. and Wizer-Vecchi, J. (2016) *Fostering Family Engagement through Shared Leadership in the District, Schools, and Community*. VUE, 44: 6-13.

- Murray, C., Murray, K.M., & Waas, G.A. (2008). Child and teacher reports of teacher-student relationships: Concordance of perspectives and associations with school adjustment in urban kindergarten classrooms*. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29, 49-61

- National Association of School Psychologists
  - http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/diversity/social-justice
    - *Guidance for Reinforcing Safe, Supportive and Positive School Environments for All Student*s [2016, post-election statement].
    - *Supporting Vulnerable Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Parents* [2016, handout].
    - *Supporting Marginalized Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Educators* [2016, handout].
    - *Understanding Race and Privilege* [2016, handout].
    - Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality in Education (2013, Position Statement].

- Nunn, L. M. (2011). Classrooms as racialized spaces: dynamics of collaboration, tension, and student attitudes in urban and suburban high schools. *Urban Education*, 46(6), 1226-1255.

- Social Work Policy Institute (2014). *Achieving Racial Equity: Calling the Social Work Profession to Action*. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.

References

- Southern Poverty Law Center (2016). *After Election Day: The Trump Effect, The Impact of the 2016 Presidential Election on our Nations Schools*. Montgomery, AL: author.
  - https://www.splcenter.org/20161128/trump-effect-impact-2016-presidential-election-our-nations-schools

- Southern Poverty Law Center (2016). 10 Day After: Harassment and Intimidation in the Aftermath of the Election. Montgomery, AL: author.
  - https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_hate_incidents_report_final.pdf

- Subramaniam, L. (2011) *Barriers to and facilitators of Latino parent involvement: One Georgia district's perspective*. Electronic Theses & Dissertations. Paper 390.

- Todd, A.R., Thiem, K.C., & Neel, R. (2016). Does seeing faces of young black boys facilitate the identification of threatening stimuli? Psychological Science, 27, 384-393. doi:10.1177/0956797615624492

- Tomes, Y.I (2013). *Cross-cultural interactions and understanding.* Poughkeepsie, NY: NOVA.

- Vidal de Hymes, H., & Kilty, K. M. (2007). Latino population growth, characteristics, and settlement trends: implications for social work education in a dynamic political climate. Journal of Social Work Education, 43(1), 101-116.

- Walker, S. A., & Pearsall, L. D. (2012). Barriers to advanced placement for Latino students at the high-school level. Roeper Review, 34(1), 12-25.

- Weisman and Hansen (2008) Student Teaching in Urban and Suburban Schools: Perspectives of Latino Preservice Teachers. Urban Education November 2008 43: 653-670.

- Wildman, S. M., & Davis, A. D. (1995). Language and silence: Making systems of privilege visible. *Santa Clara Law Review, 35*(3), 881–906. Retrieved from: http://digitalcommons.law.scu.edu/lawreview/vol35/iss3/4/